

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2550

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: JEWISH NEW YEAR CELEBRATED IN MOSCOW

USIA FOR IEE

1. OVERFLOW CROWD OF MOSCOW JEWS ATTENDED NEW YEAR SERVICES AT CENTRAL CHORAL SYNAGOGUE AND FOUND THEMSELVES SUBJECTED TO USUAL HARASSMENT BY MILITIA. MILITIA BLOCKED OFF MAIN STREET NEAR SYNAGOGUE, DIVERTED TRAFFIC SO THAT IT HAD TO PASS IN FRONT OF BUILDING, AND USED THIS AS AN EXCUSE TO CLEAR AWAY GROUPS OF JEWS CONGREGATING ON THE SURROUNDING SIDEWALKS AFTER THE SERVICE. NUMBER OF MILITIA SEEMED LARGER THAN LAST YEAR AND THEY WERE CLEARLY UNDER ORDERS TO CLEAR THE STREETS QUICKLY. THEY USED BULLHORNS AND POWERFUL NEW LOUDSPEAKER MOUNTED ON TOP OF POLICE CAR IN FRONT OF SYNAGOGUE TO EXHORT THE WORSHIPPERS TO LEAVE. SOME JEWS GOT A CHUCKLE WHEN THEY WERE IMPLORED TO MOVE ON BECUASE THEY WERE HINDERING "NORMAL INHABITANTS." WHILE ADAMANT ABOUT CLEARING THE STREET, MILITIA DID NOT USE

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FORCE AND WERE CAREFUL NOT TO PROVOKE CROWD INTO AN INCIDENT.

CROWD DISPERSED WITHIN AN HOUR AFTER SERVICE, WITH SOME YOUNG PEOPLE GOING TO A NEARBY SQUARE TO SING AND DANCE.

2. MOOD OF JEWS WAS RELATIVELY RELAXED AND SOME EXPRESSED OPTIMISM ABOUT POSSIBLE SOVIET-AMERICAN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW MANY TO EMIGRATE. ONE WELL-KNOWN ACTIVIST TOLD EMBOFF HE HAD RECENTLY TALKED BY PHONE TO JEWISH LEADERS IN NEW YORK AND HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT SOMETHING GOOD WOULD HAPPEN SOON. OTHER THANKED EMBOFFS FOR COMING AND SEEMED PLEASED BY THE INTEREST SHOWN. SEVERAL U.S. JOURNALISTS WERE ALSO PRESENT.
DUBS

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